

## Tea

Legend claims that the discovery of tea occurred in 2737 BC by the Emperor of China. At one time (202BC to 220AD), tea plants were quite limited and enjoyed only by royalty and the rich. As more tea plants were discovered, tea drinking became more common. Tea arrived in England during the 17<sup>th</sup> century and is now enjoyed all over the world.

Today there is extensive information available on tea. It is the most popular beverage in the world as well as the healthiest. Antioxidant-rich foods may play a role in reducing the risk of certain cancers, heart disease and stroke. Research indicates that naturally-occurring flavonoids found in tea have very effective antioxidant properties. ECGC is the most potent of these and is said to help against free radicals that can contribute to cancer, heart disease and clogged arteries. Sipping tea is a pleasant way to increase dietary exposure to these antioxidants. Nutritionists agree that all teas offer some benefit however they prefer brewed over bottled in order to avoid extra calories and sweeteners. Remember to check labels. The more processed the tea leaves, usually the less polyphenol content. Polyphenols include flavonoids. Oolong and black teas are oxidized or fermented so they have lower concentrations of polyphenols than green tea but they are still high in antioxidants.

*Tea (Camellia Sinesis), generally caffeinated:*

- Black, Green, Oolong, White, Pu-erh and Yellow

*Flavored Tea Caffeinated & caffeine free blends:*

- Jasmine, Earl Grey, Chai & other flavored teas

*Herbal Teas, generally caffeine free:*

- Rooibos (Red Tea), Flavored Rooibos, Honeybush, Chamomile, Mint and fruit infusions

Black, Green and White teas are all made from the Camellia sinensis plant but each undergoes an alternate

**Green tea** is made with steamed leaves and has high concentrations of EGCG. Researchers believe that the antioxidants in green tea may interfere with the growth of bladder, breast, lung, stomach, pancreatic and colorectal cancers; prevent clogging of the arteries, burn fat, counteract oxidative stress on the brain, reduce risk of neurological disorders like Alzheimer's and Parkinson's diseases, reduce risk of stroke and improve cholesterol levels.

**Black tea** is made with fermented leaves and has the highest caffeine content. It forms the basis for flavored teas like chai, along with some instant teas. Studies have shown that black tea may protect lungs from damage caused by exposure to cigarette smoke and it may also reduce the risk of stroke.

**White tea** is unfermented. It is said to have the most potent anticancer properties compared to more processed teas.

**Oolong and Pu-erh teas** are said to assist in lowering bad cholesterol levels and control weight.

Herbal teas are made from herbs, fruits, seeds or roots and have lower concentrations of antioxidants than green, white, black and oolong teas. Their chemical compositions vary widely depending on the plant used. Research is limited however claims have been made that herbal teas help to shed pounds, stave off colds and bring on restful sleep.

**Chamomile tea** is said to prevent complications from diabetes, like loss of vision and nerve and kidney damage along with stunting the growth of cancer cells.

**Hibiscus tea** is said to lower blood pressure in people with modestly elevated levels. **Rooibos tea** has flavonoids with cancer-fighting properties. **Ginger tea** aids with nausea, **Mint tea** optimizes digestion and settling stomach upset and **Berry teas** help in curbing night time cravings.

Resources:  
webmd.com  
tea.co.uk

## Fun Food Facts!



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*Traditional tea breaks have been around for approximately 200 years*

*The first book about tea was written by Lu Yu in 800 AD*

*Apart from tourism, tea is the biggest industrial activity in India*

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## Did You Know?



Type	Temp	Tea Amount	Steep Time
White Tea	175°F	1.5Tsp	4-5 min
Green Tea	175°F	1Tsp	45sec - 1 min
Oolong Tea	195°F	1Tsp	3min
Black Tea	195 - 205°F	1Tsp	2-3min
Rooibos Tea	208°F	1.5Tsp	5-6min
Herbal Tea	208°F	1.5Tsp	5-6min

If stronger flavor is desired, add more tea, not time.  
If brewing 2 or more teas together, use the instructions for the tea with the shortest time and lowest temperature

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